

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 18, 2023

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The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel
The Honorable Brendan Carr
The Honorable Geoffrey Starks
The Honorable Nathan Simington
Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Chairwoman Rosenworcel and Commissioners Carr, Starks, and Simington:

We write today to encourage the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to take important and necessary steps as soon as possible to complete work on and adopt pending updates to several universal service mechanisms that have been and remain critical to delivery of broadband in rural America.

In 2018, the FCC reformed the Alternative Connect America Cost Model (ACAM) and Connect America Fund-Broadband Loop Support (CAF-BLS) to promote rural broadband deployment and to help keep services affordable even in the face of such significant investments. These programs have been highly successful in achieving their intended goals. But more rural consumers are demanding even higher-speed broadband, and updates to these programs are needed to promote and sustain more widespread access to robust and affordable broadband.

In May 2022, the FCC sought comment on potential updates to ACAM and CAF-BLS. The notice included a series of questions regarding, among other things, the level of ACAM support necessary to prompt more widespread availability of 100/20 Mbps services, and the notice asked as well whether and how to align CAF-BLS obligations with those that may be adopted for ACAM. Since then, parties have submitted numerous filings on both programs suggesting updates to ACAM and CAF-BLS.

We encourage the FCC to complete work as soon as possible in this proceeding and to update both ACAM and CAF-BLS alike to ensure these programs are coordinated with the upcoming Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (“BEAD”) program. With proper planning and prompt action in targeted ways, both of these critical universal service programs can complement BEAD and promote more effective use of BEAD resources in reaching unserved Americans. We understand that several important details must be finalized, but we urge the FCC not to let this window of opportunity pass to update both ACAM and CAF-BLS in a way that will strengthen these proven programs – and, most importantly, deliver benefits to millions of rural Americans – for years and decades to come.

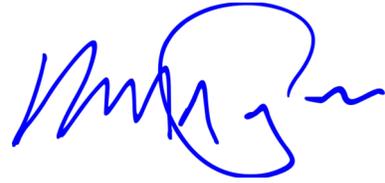
We appreciate your ongoing stewardship of these successful universal service programs, and we hope that you will act by order in coming weeks to position the ACAM and CAF-BLS programs for ongoing success and also continue progress on updates to the Alaska Plan. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

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Sincerely,



Earl L. "Buddy" Carter
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



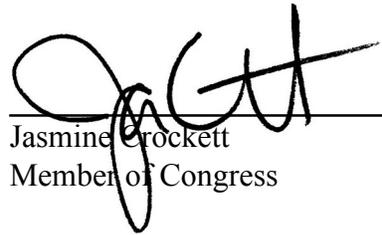
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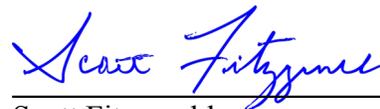


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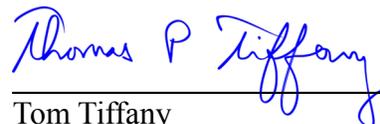
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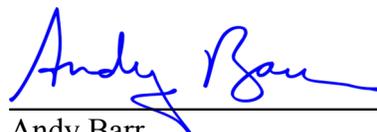
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